

HONORING THE CAROLINA
PANTHERS**HON. SUE WILKINS MYRICK**

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 21, 2004

Mrs. MYRICK. Mr. Speaker, I would like to honor and congratulate the Carolina Panthers. Last Sunday they defeated the Philadelphia Eagles to become the 2003 National Football Conference Champions. This is the first NFC title since they began in 1995, but it will not be their last.

At the beginning of the season, no one outside the Carolinas gave the Panthers any chance of even going to the playoffs. However, the "Cardiac Cats" played hard every game and never gave up. As a result, the Panthers have defied the odds and will be playing in Super Bowl XXXVIII.

As a season ticket owner, and an avid fan, I want to express how much the Carolinas appreciate the hard work of Panthers' owner Jerry Richardson, its head coach John Fox, the assistant coaches, and Carolina's wonderful players. I also want to commend the Carolina fans who have embraced the team, and have supported them through all the ups and downs.

It has been a joy to watch the Panthers play this year, and I along with thousands of fans across the Carolinas want to wish them the best of luck in the Super Bowl. I hope that in February I can again congratulate them on winning another title: National Football League Champions.

HONORING SALEM BAPTIST
CHURCH OF JENKINTOWN, PENN-
SYLVANIA**HON. JOSEPH M. HOFFEL**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 21, 2004

Mr. HOFFEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor the Salem Baptist Church of Jenkintown for its 120 years of worship and community development.

Founded in 1884, the Salem Baptist Church emerged from its modest, singleroom origins and flourished into a thriving church community. Through the immense effort of its congregation and the esteemed leadership of its pastors, Salem has grown consistently in both size and impact. Outgrowing each new building in which it resided, Salem expanded its presence in the community. Throughout its history, Salem has welcomed into its ministries such esteemed guests as Martin Luther King, Jr., Samuel Proctor, Rosa Parks, Jesse Jackson, and Pricilla Evans.

Today Salem includes the Church, a parsonage, Section 8 housing facilities for low-income residents and the elderly, and the Robert Johnson Smith Educational Center. In addition, there are plans to build a Family Life Center and nursing home facility. From its inception, the Salem Baptist Church has been committed to community development through the faith and determination of its congregation and pastors. I congratulate the members of the Salem Baptist Church on their 120th anniversary.

HONORING MARIE O'BRIEN

HON. GINNY BROWN-WAITE

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 21, 2004

Mrs. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Marie O'Brien, a resident of my Fifth Congressional District of Florida and a woman who has become something very few of us ever will. Mrs. O'Brien is a centenarian and at 102 she is a shining example of how to enjoy and appreciate life.

Mrs. O'Brien was born in Philadelphia and went to school at St. Gabriel. Following school, she worked as a telephone operator. She describes her happiest moments as family gatherings growing up and receiving the sacraments. Some of her favorite activities today are reading and praying the rosary.

After 102 years, Mrs. O'Brien says she is satisfied with her life and that it has been a pleasure. When asked what advice she'd give to young people she said, "Stay away from drugs and be kind." She says the best thing about growing older is having time to relax and appreciate the gifts God has given her.

Mr. Speaker, and my colleagues, I ask that you join me in honoring Marie O'Brien today. I hope we all have the good fortune to live as long as she has. She is truly a great lady and someone with an appreciation for the importance of kindness and kinship.

TRIBUTE TO ROBERT LEWIS SOTO

HON. JOE BACA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 21, 2004

Mr. BACA. Mr. Speaker, it is with deep affection that I pay tribute to the life of Robert Lewis Soto, beloved son of my dear colleague California State Senator Nell Soto. Robert, affectionately called "Bud" by his friends and family, passed away last week at the age of 52. He was a man of great honor, and I join today with family and friends in honoring his memory and remarkable life.

Bud graduated from Pasadena Community College where he was a classically trained musician and soon developed a reputation as being one of the most skilled keyboard players in the area. Despite his avid love for music, he took his immense talent into the business world.

An award-winning construction executive, Bud was best known for his restoration efforts of the San Gabriel Valley and San Fernando Valley Missions. He exhibited tremendous passion, pride, and an immense dedication to his work. He was a beloved part of his family and respected member of his community. His kind and passionate spirit was an incredible resource and blessing to those who knew him.

I join today with family and friends in paying our respects to a man who was a devoted and supportive husband, father, and friend. He is survived by his wife Alice, their three children Nellie, Sally, and Molly; his mother, Senator Nell Soto; his sister Anna; his brothers Phil Jr., Mike, Patrick, and Tom. He will be dearly missed.

SEMINAR ON KHALISTAN HELD IN
PUNJAB—STEP FORWARD FOR
SIKH FREEDOM MOVEMENT**HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 21, 2004

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, last month in Punjab, a seminar was held on the topic of Khalistan. Given the oppression that Sikhs have faced at the hands of the Indian government for attempting to secure their independence, this was a very courageous act. All of those who organized the event and who participated are to be commended for their courage. Freedom is the birthright of every people.

The seminar was organized by former Member of Parliament Atinder Pal Singh. Speakers included Professor Gurdarshan Singh Dhillon, who reportedly made an extremely strong argument for the Sikh Nation's right to self-determination.

The Indian government claims that there is no support for Sikh independence, Mr. Speaker, but this seminar and other events show otherwise. Perhaps this answers the obvious question: If India is a democracy and if there is no support for an independent Khalistan, then why not simply hold a free and fair plebiscite on the issue, as democratic countries do, and settle it once and for all? Wouldn't that be the fair and democratic way to take care of this issue?

America can support this just cause and we have a moral obligation to do so. We can stop our aid to India until all people there enjoy full freedom and we can officially call on India to hold a free and fair, democratic vote to determine the political future of the Sikhs of Khalistan and all the other minority nations seeking their freedom, such as predominantly Christian Nagaland and predominantly Muslim Kashmir.

The Council of Khalistan issued a press release on the Khalistan seminar, which I would like to put in the RECORD at this time to show that the cause of freedom is universal and that it still has strong support in Punjab, Khalistan.

SEMINAR ON KHALISTAN HELD IN PUNJAB

INDEPENDENCE MOVEMENT IS ALIVE AND WELL
IN PUNJAB, KHALISTAN

WASHINGTON, D.C., December 17, 2003—Former Member of Parliament Atinder Pal Singh organized a seminar on Khalistan last month at Baba Makhana Shah Labana Hall, Sector 30, Chandigarh. Speakers included Professor Gurdarshan Singh Dhillon and others. Dr. Dhillon made a very strong argument for the right of the Sikh Nation to rule itself in a sovereign, independent Khalistan. General Narinder Singh was invited, but unable to attend. This seminar shows that the cause of Khalistan is alive and well in Punjab, despite the claims of the Indian government that there is no support for Khalistan and that only outside Sikhs are supporting independence.

"The outside Sikhs have an important role to play," said Dr. Gurmit Singh Aulakh, President of the Council of Khalistan. "They have exposed the human rights against the Sikhs to the international community and internationalized the cause of independence for Khalistan," he said. "They have also preserved Sikh history in the Congressional Record from 1984 to date, defeating the Indian government's attempts to alter it. However, it is the Sikhs in Punjab, Khalistan who are keeping the cause alive and liberating Khalistan," he said. "It is very good to